

Rural hospitals may imitate rather than evaluate when making organizational changes

For many decades, policy-makers have been faced with the question of how to assure adequate access to health care services for residents of rural areas. A key component of the rural health care delivery system is the rural hospital. This study found that when faced with various economic or organizational pressures, many rural hospitals may choose to imitate others due either to uncertainty or a limited ability to fully evaluate different strategic options. This can result in actions or behaviors that are not consistent with policy objectives, which in turn may lead to policy changes that can have a negative effect on other rural providers and rural residents. This information is important for policy-makers as they design and implement policies affecting the delivery of health care services in rural areas. *Krein SL. The adoption of provider-based rural health clinics by rural hospitals: A study of market and institutional forces. Health Services Research. 1999; 34(1): 33-60.* Contact: Sarah Krein, PhD, (734) 930-5142, e-mail at skrein@umich.edu.